10: Graham E-5 (1921-?) 1954 AE5 Miao AE5

As we have seen, the deceased ancestors are commemorated by numerous ceremonies in which offerings are made, but the Ch'uan Miao assert that they do not regard ancestors as deities. 769

Among more primitive peoples is found the mana concept, that of a superhuman, supernatural, strange power that is present in unusual persons, deities, and things. Among the Ch'uan Miao this power is assumed but not named or theorized about. It is possessed by gods, godlike creatures, devils, the *do nun* or exorcist, the *mo* or priest, the *bo ntzong* who transforms people into tigers, the ceremonial drum, the *liu sheng*, the ceremonial crossbow, the ceremonial *lin p'ai*, the sword, the seal, etc. There are magic fans by the waving of which battles can be won and other wonders performed, and there are magical charms and incantations possessing this strange power. 789

Tigers, foxes, snakes, banana trees, vines, rats, frogs, cattle, and eels are believed to change into human form and vice versa. Sometimes they change into human form to help people, but often it is to do them harm, and people injured by them must be saved from death by the magician, the *do nun*. 82

The Ch'uan Miao regard all things as alive and sentient. The sun, moon, stars, mountains, rivers, rocks, trees, thunder, the echo, the rainbow, homes, fields, plains, recompense or karma, beds, marriage, swords, the harvest, the year, the *liu sheng*, the ceremonial drum, and even the sound of the ceremonial drum are considered to be living things. Ample evidence of this is found in the stories, and it has often been confirmed to the writer by the Ch'uan Miao themselves.

I ear is a living creature with a head like that of a human being. The *liu sheng* is alive, and when played it is regarded as speaking. Ceremonial drums speak when being beaten in the ceremonies. Mountains have heads, feet, hands, eyes, ears, hearts, breasts, veins, and arteries. A plain may be male or female and has a mouth, a heart, arteries, veins, and sinews. The sun and the moon have parents. Rocks and stones are male and female, grow, have offspring, and can speak. Some stones may become immortals. The echo has a deceptive character and can act and speak. Thunder is a living creature, in size and shape like a rooster. It is small but powerful, and its call is the noise of thunder. It has a knife of fire, and when it throws this there is lightning. It is this knife that causes damage when lightning strikes.

The Ch'uan Miao find it natural to say that all things, even those that are inanimate, are alive and have lives, but they find it difficult and less natural to say that inanimate things have souls, although lives are intelligent, active, and have eyes. In some old stories it is stated that people have lives and that the lives are located in the armpits. Are we right or wrong if we call this animatism?

GRAMMAR AND PRONUNCIATION

The grammar of the Ch'uan Miao in some respects resembles that of the Chinese. It is monosyllabic and tonal. The order of the sentence is subject, predicate, and object, but the object follows the noun and the adverb follows the verb. In the Chinese language there is the aspirate and the nonaspirate, but the Ch'uan Miao have the nonaspirate, the "little aspirate," and the "big aspirate." The big aspirate 194 [193]